

**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

5 1. A stopper device comprising:  
a stopper;  
a first tubular member;  
a second tubular member fitting inside said first tubular member;  
said stopper controlling movement of said second tubular member with  
respect to said first tubular member;  
a stopper supporting member, fitted to an outer surface of said first tubular  
member, supporting said stopper;  
10 said stopper supporting member having a first end and a second, opposite  
end;  
said second end being proximate to a location where said second tubular  
member slides in and out of said first tubular member; and  
a first diameter of said first end being greater than a second diameter of  
15 said second end.

2. The stopper device according to claim 1, wherein said stopper  
supporting member has a tapered shape, with a diameter gradually increasing from  
said second end to said first end.

20 3. The stopper device according to claim 1, further comprising:  
a rotation operating lever, pushing said stopper against or moving said  
stopper away from an outer surface of said second tubular member, thereby  
causing said stopper to prevent said second tubular member from moving when

said stopper is pressed against said outer surface, or cause said stopper to permit said second tubular member to move by releasing said stopper from being pressed against said outer surface;

first and second bearing portions, facing each other at opposite ends of said stopper supporting member;

a stopper supporting hole between said first and second bearing portions;

said stopper fitting in said stopper supporting hole;

a supporting shaft portion of said rotation operating lever being supported by said first and second bearing portions, permitting rotation thereof.

4. The stopper device according to claim 1, further comprising:

a rotation operating lever, pushing said stopper against or moving said stopper away from an outer surface of said second tubular member, thereby causing said stopper to prevent said second tubular member from moving when said stopper is pressed against said outer surface, or cause said stopper to permit said second tubular member to move by releasing said stopper from being pressed against said outer surface;

first and second bearing portions, facing each other at opposite ends of said stopper supporting member;

a stopper supporting hole between said first and second bearing portions;

said stopper fitting in said stopper supporting hole;

a supporting shaft portion of said rotation operating lever being supported by said first and second bearing portions, permitting rotation thereof.

45 5. The stopper device according to claim 3, wherein said stopper supporting hole is formed at about a midpoint along an axial length of said stopper supporting member.

5 6. The stopper device according to claim 4, wherein said stopper supporting hole is formed at about a midpoint along an axial length of said stopper supporting member.

7. The stopper device according to claim 3, wherein said rotation operating lever has an operating tab portion having a shape corresponding to the outer shape of the stopper supporting member.

10 8. The stopper device according to claim 1, further comprising:  
at least a second stopper;  
at least a third tubular member;  
said third tubular member fitting inside said second tubular member;  
said second stopper controlling movement of said third tubular member  
15 with respect to said second tubular member;  
at least a second stopper supporting member, fitted to an outer surface of said second tubular member;  
said second stopper supporting member having a first end and a second, opposite end;  
20 said second end of said second stopper support member being proximate to a location where said third tubular member slides in and out of said second tubular member;

5      a first diameter of said first end of said second stopper support member being substantially the same diameter as said second diameter of said second end of said stopper supporting member, whereby when said second tubular member is completely inserted in said first tubular member, said stopper supporting member meets said second stopper supporting member, forming a substantially even outer surface therebetween.

9. A telescopic unit comprising:

a first tubular member;

10      a second tubular member disposed in said first tubular member, moving along an axis of said first tubular member whereby the distance by which said second tubular member projects from said first tubular member is adjusted by moving said second tubular member;

15      a third tubular member disposed in said second tubular member, moving along an axis of said second tubular member whereby the distance by which said third tubular member projects from said second tubular member is adjusted by moving said third tubular member;

a first stopper controlling movement of said second tubular member along said first tubular member;

20      a first stopper supporting member, fitted to an outer surface of said first tubular member, supporting said first stopper;

a second stopper controlling movement of said third tubular member along said second tubular member;

a second stopper supporting member, fitted to an outer surface of said second tubular member, supporting said second stopper;

Sub 97  
a first facing end of said first stopper supporting member facing said second stopper supporting member;

a second facing end of said second stopper supporting member facing said first stopper supporting member;

5 said first facing end being located adjacent to said second facing end when said second tubular member is adjusted to project from said first tubular member by a minimum distance; and

said first facing end and said second facing end having substantially the same outer dimensions.

10 10. The telescopic unit according to claim 9, wherein said first stopper supporting member and said second stopper supporting member together form a continuously tapered shape when said second stopper supporting member is adjusted to project from said first tubular member by a minimum distance.

97